

● BACK CORBYN—VOTE LABOUR
● VOTE LEFT IN SCOTLAND



Socialist Worker

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TORIES BOOST BILLIONAIRES

RIGGED

**Kick
out the
Tories**

RULE FOR

THE RICH

**THOUSAND RICHEST GRABBED
EXTRA £82.5 BILLION LAST YEAR**

>>Pages 10&11



FRANCE

Election of Macron won't solve crisis for the ruling class

LIBERAL technocrat Emmanuel Macron was elected president of France last Sunday.

Fascist Marine Le Pen got over 10.5 million votes and remains a serious threat.

Over 16 million people either abstained or cast blank or spoiled ballots to avoid voting for either of them.

>>Pages 14&15

LABOUR



Corbyn's fight can spark revolt against powerful

LARGE RALLIES for Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn have shown what an insurgent Labour election campaign could look like.

The right sneers at the rallies. But some 900 people turned out to see Corbyn in Leicester last Saturday, and 700 were in Leamington Spa on Monday.

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ANTI-RACISM

Let's organise to kick racism out of the election

THE TORIES and right wing press want their racist vision for Brexit to dominate the general election campaign.

Labour faces pressure to ape the right on immigration.

Anti-racists are organising to kick racism out of the general election.

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THE THINGS THEY SAY

‘Emmanuel spoke to me before he set up En Marche and kind of floated the idea by me’

Labour's Chuka Umunna takes credit for the French election

‘I’m a bit squiffy’

Chuka Umunna on a Progressive Alliance

‘We’re not even allowed to show you her visiting the building’

Cornish journalist who was locked in a room during a Theresa May visit to St Ives

‘If May calls early election we hacks won’t be able to trust No 10’

Hack Isabel Oakeshott on Twitter just before Theresa May announced election

‘Sensational move by May sensational leadership’

Isabel Oakeshott just after May announced the election

‘Unrealistic to expect him to sound like some little virtue-signaling snowflake’

Tony Parsons explains his love of Prince Phillip's "jokes"

Tories launch secret plans to stop your secret messages

THE TORIES don't understand encryption so they are trying to get rid of it.

The government has secretly, obviously secretly, drawn up detailed plans for increased surveillance powers.

They include the authority to monitor anyone in real time and a ban on unbreakable encryption.

The draft legislation was leaked by the Open Rights Group. It would force internet, telephone and other communications companies to provide rolling access to the messages of any named person within one working day.

A large number of people could be subjected to simultaneous surveillance.

But it would be limited to one in every 10,000 of a service's users, enabling

about 6,500 individuals to be monitored.

It would need to be sanctioned by a secretary of state and a judge appointed by the prime minister.

Which isn't really that reassuring.

The rules specifically cover encrypted content, which means that companies would no longer be able to offer true end-to-end encryption of users' messages.

Amber Rudd, the home secretary, has made it clear that she would force technology and communications companies to co-operate proactively with the security services.

She was highly critical of WhatsApp, which is owned by Facebook, after it signalled that it would not remove end-to-end encryption to give MI5 access to messages.

A consultation on the

draft rules is under way although this was not publicly announced.

Technical capability notices (TCNs) can be used to order companies with over 10,000 users to adapt their technology to enable intercept and metadata collection.

While this power already existed under the Investigatory Powers Act, the regulation provides much more detail about what companies could be compelled to do if they are served with a TCN. The Home Office has no legal obligation to notify the public about draft regulations.

But it would have been nice to get a text.

The paper indicates that the regulations have already been seen by the Technical Advisory Board, which comprises representatives of O2, BT, BSkyB, Cable and

Wireless, Vodafone and Virgin Media.

But not Troublmaker.

FORGET “STRONG and stable”, the Tories have made “nonsensical” their attack buzzword of the election, using it to bash Jeremy Corbyn 25 times on TV and in press releases over a fortnight. The first use was by Theresa May during one of those nonsensical bunkered hidden campaign visits to Bridgend where no one is let in.

The supporters are over there

THE SUN'S understanding of Marx is impressive. “Revolutionary socialist Karl Marx wrote the economic tome in 1867 where he predicted the end of capitalism and called for the abolition of private property,” it wrote. “He made the remarks after Labour's disastrous results in local elections last week”.

Comment is free but front page copy costs

THE GUARDIAN gave front page treatment to Bill Gates's intervention in the general election campaign.

He gave an interview to the paper warning of disastrous consequences if Theresa May abandoned an overseas aid pledge.

The story was seasoned with complimentary asides noting that the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation “has been one of the most persuasive advocates of the argument that aid works”.

The article failed to mention the aid the Gates Foundation gives to some of the neediest people at the Guardian.

Gates pays for the paper's global development section.

The foundation's 2015 tax return records a £5,686,494 grant awarded to Guardian News and Media Ltd in August 2011 of which £3,397,001 had been spent as of the 2015 return.

Tory wins seat but is thrown out of Masons

CONGRATULATIONS are in order for senior Great Yarmouth councillor Ronald Hanton who was re-elected last week.

Disgracefully the former copper has been suspended from his local Masonic lodge after a hole was discovered in the accounts. The lodge chair and treasurer were both permanently excluded in April. Vice-chair Hanton and the lodge's secretary were each given a six-month suspension by a vote of members, for “failing in the discharge of the duties of their respective offices”. Forensic accountants found more than £16,000

missing from the Great Yarmouth Masonic Lodge bar accounts.

They concluded there had been a “misappropriation” of assets but warned that due to haphazard record-keeping and lack of proper systems for banking funds, it might not be possible to identify who was responsible. This proved correct. Norfolk Constabulary concluded this year that there wasn't enough evidence against any individual for a conviction.

Grim shady Tory raps

FORMER TORY leader Iain Duncan Smith “rapped” Eminem lyrics on television in a jibe at Labour's Diane Abbott.

Duncan Smith, the US rapper's lyrics from “Lose Yourself” to mock the shadow home secretary.

During an appearance on Good Morning Britain the former minister broke into verse at presenter Piers Morgan's prompting.

“He opens his mouth but the words don't come out / He's choking now / everybody's joking now / and the clock's run out”.

But from the same tune is, “His palms are sweaty, knees weak, arms are heavy / There's vomit on his sweater already, mom's spaghetti / He's nervous.”

Sun kills prince

NEWS OF a staff meeting at Buckingham Palace sent the media into a frenzy of rumour.

Not least the Sun who jumped the gun and wrongly reported that Prince Philip had died (above). Shame really.

Daily Mail forgets France

THE FRENCH Presidency was won by Emmanuel Macron, who beat Front National Marine le Pen.

But the Sun and the Daily Mail steered clear of the news from France, instead leading on how Prince Harry has a girlfriend. And both had lead editorials on how evil John McDonnell is.

It was so different last month after Le Pen had secured her place in the run-off.

Then, the Mail devoted its front page to that news, proclaiming a “NEW FRENCH REVOLUTION”.

As the Daily Mail wouldn't put it, plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose—the more it changes, the more it's the same thing.

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Regional summits aim to kick racism out of election

THE TORIES and right wing press want their racist, nationalist vision for Brexit to dominate the general election campaign.

The Tory manifesto will call for slashing immigration to the “tens of thousands”.

They will attack migrants even though some ministers worry about upsetting their friends in big business who rely on migrant workers.

Theresa May is determined to ramp up racism in order to win right wing support and divide working class people.

Her government is refusing to guarantee European Union (EU) migrants’ right to remain and wants to dump freedom of movement altogether.

The pressure is on for left wing leader Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party to ape the right on immigration.

Keir Starmer, the shadow Brexit secretary, has argued that free movement for EU migrants has to end.

Kick

Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) is organising to kick racism out of the general election.

A SUTR regional summit in Birmingham last Saturday brought together over 130 people from across the West Midlands.

Saira, one of the women who confronted the English Defence League in Birmingham last month, spoke to Socialist Worker.

“There is definitely an Islamophobic campaign—we saw that before with the London mayoral campaign and Sadiq Khan,” she said.

“Around Brexit there’s a lot of talk about immigration too.

“All these organisations and individuals need to take a stand—even going into their conferences like that woman did with Ukip.”

Andrew Scattergood, FBU fire-fighters’ union regional chair, called on the labour movement to reject

ANTI-FASCISM



ANTI-FASCISTS CONFRONTED Nazis from the South East Alliance in Croydon last Saturday. Turn to page 18 for a report

PICTURE: KELVIN WILLIAMS

racist myths about immigration.

“It’s not migrant workers suppressing wages—it’s the profiteering bosses and politicians in Westminster,” he said.

People discussed how to take that message into every workplace, school and neighbourhood (see right).

As Scattergood said, “I’ve seen so many times people wanting to take on the argument but they don’t have the tools in their chest.

“We need to put the arguments in the members’ hands.”

Workshops focused on defending EU migrants’ right to remain and free movement, fighting Islamophobia and the “Prevent” strategy, and building Love Music Hate Racism.

Anti-racists were set to campaign in Birmingham as part of SUTR’s day of action to “Kick Racism out the election” day of action this Wednesday.

Further regional summits are planned in Manchester, Bristol and Sheffield later this month.

Stand Up To Racism has launched

a statement with major political, trade union and faith community figures calling on parties and candidates to keep racism out of the election.

Initial signatories include Diane Abbott, John McDonnell, Kevin Courtney of the NUT teachers’ union, Mark Serwotka of the PCS civil service workers’ union and Tony Kearns of the CWU union.

Go to bit.ly/2qSNtB0 to find details of a regional summit near you. Keep racism out of the election statement at standuptoracism.org.uk

Resisting Islamophobia

RESISTING THE Tories’ assault on Muslims was an important part of the Stand Up To Racism regional summit in Birmingham.

At the workshop on challenging Islamophobia people debated if workers should outright boycott the Islamophobic “Prevent” strategy.

This legally forces public sector workers, such as teachers, to spy for signs of “radicalisation”.

One Unison union member from Coventry said, “The unions have good national policy on it, but there’s no cast iron guarantee that

if we challenge it we won’t be dismissed.

“The union should say we’ll bring in the big guns to defend people.” The workshop also heard about local Muslim anti-war campaigner Abu Alamgir, who has been on the receiving end of police Islamophobia.

“The police came to my house asking why I’ve been going to political meetings and what my political opinions on issues such as Palestine are,” he told Socialist Worker.

“But that’s my right to freedom of speech.”



Cops target Muslims

Getting organised at work

HEALTH WORKERS in east London are organising to take the fight against racism into their workplaces.

A new Stand Up To Racism workplace group at Mile End hospital is getting an echo among people who are new to politics.

Salma is one of the health workers who came to the group’s organising meeting in the hospital canteen last Wednesday.

“I’ve only been involved for around two months, I didn’t think of myself as political or active before,” she told Socialist Worker. “But with all that’s happening, I wanted to see what I and the group could do.”

Theresa May’s refusal to guarantee European Union (EU) migrants’ rights is a big issue for health workers. Goulshana, another health worker, said, “The NHS is already starting to splinter with privatisation and if we got rid of migrants it would totally go.”

The experience of people from across the world working alongside one another is an opportunity to build unity. As Salma said, “In the NHS we work with people from all sorts of backgrounds and we live alongside people from many parts of the world.”

Workplace meetings like this can help build people’s confidence to take on racism.

Goulshana said, “Something like this can make you feel like you can make a difference.”

Health workers plan stalls in the canteen and one at Mile End Tube station as part of SUTR’s day of action this Wednesday.

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Corbyn can turn his campaign into a revolt against the rich

by NICK CLARK

LARGE RALLIES for Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn have shown what a strong and insurgent Labour election campaign could look like.

Some 900 people turned out to see Corbyn speak at a rally in Leicester last Saturday. Many more were turned away at the door, even though the rally hadn't been widely advertised.

Corbyn acknowledged that Labour faced a "huge challenge" over the next few weeks in its campaign to win the general election on 8 June.

But he got enthusiastic cheers as he tore into "greedy bankers" and "tax dodgers", who have rigged the system and would hate to see a Labour win.

Corbyn said the election was "a chance to break free, to create a society in which people are no longer held back by a system that is rigged for the rich".

And he described growing resentment at years of Tory rule.

"This Tory leader sat alongside David Cameron in government for six years," he said.

"Does she think people will forget what the Tories have done to this country, how they've actually treated working people?"

Corbyn's speech in Leicester came ahead of a similar event in Leamington Spa on Monday of this week. And it came after another rally in Manchester celebrating Labour's victory in the mayoral election.

John Lockwood in Leamington told Socialist Worker, "I'd say there were over 700 people who turned up to see Corbyn."

"That's very significant with only a day's notice and the timing being the middle of the afternoon."

"At times the police had trouble trying to keep the road open. It was quite remarkable."

"He got a very enthusiastic



Theresa May's welcome in Bristol

ANTI-TORY AMMUNITION

To stock up on Socialist Worker election materials, contact us on 020 7840 5600, at enquiries@swp.org.uk or by writing to PO Box 71327, London SE11 9BW

Kick out the Tories

BADGE 50p or 10 for £3

reception and cheers."

Right wing Labour Party members have sneered at the rallies. But Labour can only win with a campaign that enthuses and inspires supporters—and builds a sense of a real popular fightback against the Tories.

And it has to be linked with broader fights against austerity and racism.

As Labour's shadow chancellor John McDonnell said last week, Labour has to "come out fighting".

In some towns Labour members have joined other activists—including people outside of Labour—for campaign days of action against austerity and racism.

Members of Stand Up To Racism, Stop the War, The People's Assembly, Momentum, the NUT union and Keep our NHS Public campaigned alongside one another in Cambridge town centre last Friday.

Anger

A cardboard cutout of Theresa May provided shoppers with a chance to vent their anger by fixing comments on her.

Activist Richard Rose told Socialist Worker, "Campaigners said they'd thrived on the sense of solidarity the day gave and want to repeat it."

Similar events are planned in Bristol, Leeds, Sheffield and Birmingham—and activists in other towns should set up their own.

In Wigan a large meeting of activists organised by the trades council vowed to campaign to defend the NHS.

Barry Conway from the trades council said the meeting was an opportunity to build the fight against the Tories.

"The argument we always hear at meetings is, 'Let's get out on the knocker for Labour', but we have to get people out onto the streets."

On other pages...

The money's there to stop cuts, but the rich have it all >>>Pages 10&11

CORBYN SPEAKS in Manchester—a taste of the campaign that could win the election

PICTURE: JOHN CLARK

Council elections are rude awakening

THE RESULTS of local elections held across Britain on Thursday of last week are an urgent warning of what could happen at the general election.

The Labour Party lost a total of 320 council seats while the Tories gained more than 550. Labour also lost control of seven councils as the Tories gained 11.

In some of the mayoral elections Labour was well ahead of the Tories. Labour won three times the Tory vote in the Liverpool city and Greater Manchester mayoral elections.

Labour did better than expected in the West of England mayor vote and came second—with a pro-Corbyn candidate.

Narrowly

But in Tees Valley the Conservatives secured a shock win. And the Tories also very narrowly took the West Midlands mayor.

In Scotland the decline of Labour—which long pre-dates Corbyn's leadership—continued

(see page 7). Right wing Labour MPs said the results showed working class people had been driven away by Corbyn's left wing policies.

Former MP Alan Johnson said Labour did not have a "god-given right" to support from working class people. He suggested the party was "blasé" about "losing touch" with "working class communities".

That's rich coming from a key cabinet member in Tony Blair and Gordon Brown's New Labour governments. As health minister Johnson oversaw cuts to social care, and as Ed Milliband's shadow chancellor said Labour had to be serious about making cuts.

Some of Labour's worst results last week were in areas where its councillors have rammed through cuts, such as in Durham and Derbyshire.

In Durham Labour lost 20 seats after strikes against a pay cut for teaching assistants became a lightning rod for anger

at the council. The seats went to a variety of different parties and candidates, including independents, some right wing.

Teaching assistant Megan said the councillors that voted to slash their pay were "not Labour at all and definitely not with the principles and beliefs of Corbyn".

Angry

"I have been trying to make the distinction between Labour locally and nationally but some people are so angry they can't get past it."

Labour peer Margaret Beckett blamed the Tories for Labour's council cuts. She said the Tories had "done a good job" of getting people to blame Labour.

But Labour councils have only themselves to blame for the anger at the austerity they've forced through.

Only a bold campaign offering a real alternative to austerity would see Labour avoid a similar defeat nationally.

Bitter together—Ukip donor Arron Banks and Nigel Farage in happier times

Ukip 'crashed car' as its voters go back to Tories

THE RACIST Ukip party lost 144 of the 145 seats it contested in last Thursday's local elections.

Former Ukip MP Douglas Carswell wrote in the Guardian newspaper, "It's over. Ukip is finished."

Party leader Paul Nuttall is standing in the Boston and Skegness constituency in Lincolnshire in the general election. Ukip had ten seats on the county council—but last week it lost every single one.

Former Ukip donor Aaron Banks compared Ukip's current situation to a Formula One race.

He said Ukip's leadership had "crashed the car at the first bend of the

race, into the crowd, killing the driver and spectators".

Ukip's woes should cheer every anti-racist. But there are also problems.

Carswell went on to say, "As Ukip's first—and last—MP, I am far from despondent. In fact, I am elated. Because we have won.

"Thousands of Ukip supporters realise the only way to make sure we get the Brexit deal we need is to make sure Theresa gets a mega mandate."

Former Ukip supporters voted for the Tories instead—helping them to win over 550 council seats. Theresa May's vision of a racist Brexit won over

former Ukip voters. Theresa May's vision of a racist Brexit won over

One defeated Ukip candidate Danny Brooks said, "Theresa May could nearly be Ukip leader, given the way she is talking."

And Nuttall said, "If the price of Britain leaving the EU is a Tory advance then it is a price Ukip is prepared to pay. We are the victims of our own success."

There are differences between Ukip—an overtly racist party based on a fake anti-establishment rhetoric—and the Tories.

But the disgusting racism it pushes is at the heart of May's government.

The fight against racism is far from over.

Sadie Robinson

Scarborough protesters tell Tory MPs to frack off

WHILE gloating Tory MPs were posing for photos by the seaside outside the count in Scarborough, fracking campaigners held a protest over a recent incident of sea pollution.

Around 15 people held a banner up, disrupting the photoshoot.

Steve Parker from Frack Free Scarborough told Socialist Worker, "Across the north of England water treatment capacity is being exceeded



Anti-fracking protesters in Scarborough last year

already. So if fracking comes online like the Conservatives want, there isn't capacity to treat the waste water. "Fracking

companies have already said that if necessary they'll pump it out to sea and that will just add to the pollution."

Socialist Worker
WHAT WE THINK

WE CAN OVERTHROW CAPITALIST HORROR SHOW

RIGHT WINGERS have raised the spectre of Communism to discredit Labour's left wing leader Jeremy Corbyn.

Speaking on the BBC's Andrew Marr show, John McDonnell had said "there is a lot to learn" from revolutionary Karl Marx's masterwork Capital.

Dubbing them the "Marx Brothers", the Daily Telegraph newspaper thought its most lurid fantasies about the Labour Party had become true.

Tory minister Priti Patel jumped in, claiming the "nonsensical ideas of Karl Marx" were "just a glimpse of the destruction" a Labour government would cause.

It's no wonder that the likes of Patel scaremonger about Marx.

Transform

At the heart of Marxism is the idea that working class people have the power to transform society—and run it without the bosses.

As Marx's collaborator Frederick Engels wrote in the Communist Manifesto, "Our notion, from the very beginning, was that 'the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself'."

As the Sunday Times Rich List showed this week, under capitalism a tiny minority get rich off the backs of working class people (see pages 10&11).

Apologists for the status quo claim that all this wealth is a reward for capitalists' "hard work" and "business acumen".

But Marx showed that bosses make profit by exploiting workers, who create the value that profits are based on.

Capitalism is driven forward by competition between firms. If bosses don't try to squeeze more out of workers, they could go bust.

Everything is subsumed to this logic of competition. It cannot

“**Marxism is the idea that working class people have the power to transform society**”

any details of its immigration policy. Jeremy Corbyn rightly said that it would recognise migrants' "contribution". But he also said migration had to be "managed" in order to be "fair".

Instead of defending the right to migrate, Labour is set to haggle with the Tories over how far to restrict it. That's a losing strategy.

As soon as Labour accepts that "unmanaged" migration is "unfair" it boosts parties that look sincere in their anti-migrant racism.

And behind the numbers

be tamed to meet the needs of ordinary people.

So while climate change will affect capitalists, the drive for more profits takes precedence.

Just last week financial magazine Bloomberg boasted that Norway was leading oil exploration in the Arctic.

Melting

Donald Trump also wants to sink new wells in the Arctic—and this is only possible because the ice caps are melting due to climate change.

But for Marx workers aren't just victims of this horror show. Bosses can only make profits through exploiting workers.

That means we can put the brakes on the train before it carries us all into the abyss.

Marxists emphasise workers' self-activity, whether that's strikes, protests or demonstrations because through struggle people can get rid of injustice and oppression.

They can build a socialist society based on liberation.

Nobody should be defensive about being a Marxist. It means you want to understand society—and change it.

are policies with life and death consequences.

Around 80 people drowned in a shipwreck between Libya and Italy last weekend because they couldn't enter Europe safely.

A man was electrocuted on the roof of a Eurostar train leaving Paris last week in a desperate bid to get to Britain.

The Tories' racist assault must be stopped. The only solution is a principled defence of the freedom of movement, refugees and migrants' rights.

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ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



May promises more than she can deliver

JEAN-CLAUDE JUNCKER, president of the European Commission, has of course played into Theresa May's hands. He let his staff leak a thoroughly disparaging account of a dinner she gave for him at Downing Street to a German conservative newspaper.

Juncker reportedly rang German chancellor Angela Merkel afterwards, saying that May was "living in another galaxy". Merkel then publicly denounced British "illusions" in the benefits of Brexit.

May reacted with a speech outside Downing Street accusing the European Union (EU) of meddling in the British general election. She appealed to voters to "give me your backing to fight for Britain".

The entire episode was very helpful to May's election strategy, which is to brand the Tories under her leadership as the party of Brexit.

As we saw in last week's local elections, this has already tipped many former Ukip voters her way. But May's bigger play is for Labour supporters who voted to leave the EU in the referendum last June.

We'll see soon enough whether this strategy has worked. But even a big Tory win won't alter the fact that May will probably find herself in a very hard place in the Brexit negotiations with the rest of the EU.

Britain is at an inherent disadvantage. Having triggered Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty, it will automatically be out of the EU on 29 March 2019, whether or not an agreement has been reached.

The banks and transnational corporations based in Britain would suddenly face much worse access to the European market if there were no agreement.

The EU is a thoroughly opaque and undemocratic set of institutions divided between conflicting interests. But it looks as if those of its leaders who still want to turn the EU into a federation want either no agreement or one that is very unfavourable to Britain.

Commission

The commentator Wolfgang Munchau says the dinner leak indicates that "the commission is trying to sabotage the process, not very intelligently".

Juncker is indeed a buffoon. His main claim to fame is his efforts as prime minister of Luxembourg to turn it into a tax haven.

Donald Tusk, president of the European Council, has tried to calm things down, and implicitly criticised Juncker. But the pressures on the 27 other member states to maintain a common front against Britain are strong. Faced with the threat of disintegration thanks to the crises over the euro and refugees along with the growth of anti-EU parties, they have an incentive to show that leaving the EU has a high price.

Indeed, what the Juncker leak suggests is that Britain is going to face many of the bullying tactics that were used against the left wing Syriza government in Greece in 2015 when it tried to negotiate a reduction in the country's debt burden.

Yanis Varoufakis, Greek finance minister till Syriza's capitulation to the EU in July 2015, has just published a book about the experience called *Adults in the Room*. He told the Times newspaper last week, "There will be no negotiations [between the EU and Britain], make no mistake."

Of course, Britain is a far more powerful state than Greece. It is nuclear armed, a member of the United Nations Security Council, presiding over the biggest international financial centre and what is still a relatively strong economy. And because Britain never joined the euro, the EU can't do what the European Central Bank did to Greece and shut down its banking system.

There are also powerful economic interests, notably in Germany, that do want an amicable Brexit settlement.

But the imbalance between the two sides remains. EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier pointedly said last week that the "clock was ticking".

One theory why May called an election now is that a big majority will allow her to take compromises with the EU to keep access to the European market.

But by campaigning against the EU she may create expectations in the Tory party that she will find hard to control.



FOREST HILL School strikers are at the frontline of the fight to stop funding cuts

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

We're going to teach Tories a lesson over school funding

by SADIE ROBINSON

THE TORIES are in crisis over their planned education cuts. The first copy of the Evening Standard newspaper edited by former chancellor George Osborne last week ran a front page on the crisis.

It said Tories were urging Theresa May to abandon the cuts plan before the general election.

And the first of a series of protests against the cuts was set to take place this Saturday in Lancaster.

More regional protests are planned over the coming weeks (see box, right).

Many schools face cuts even before the Tories' "fair funding formula" has come into effect.

But there is also resistance.

NUT union members at Forest Hill School in south London struck for the seventh time on Wednesday of last week.

Transform

Labour-run Lewisham council wants the school to push through a £1.3 million cuts package that would transform the school.

Danielle and Lucia are teachers in performing arts. "We have five clubs at the moment, but we're looking at that changing to one," said Danielle.

"We currently pay for a

professional breakdancer to come into the school—it's only about £400 a year. But we won't be able to afford that anymore."

Lucia added, "A lot of people are leaving—it's driving people out."

The cuts mean teachers would be expected to teach between three and four hours more a week.

This means less time for preparation, marking and contacting parents.

As striker Rebecca said, "I don't think we'll be able to do the job."

SOLIDARITY

Show your support for Forest Hill School strikers

● The next planned walkouts are 16, 24, 25 May and 6, 14, 15, 20, 28 and 29 June

● Public meeting – Fight the cuts at Forest Hill School – Thursday 11 May, 7pm, Forest Hill Methodist Church, SE23 2DS

● Send messages of support to membsec@lewisham.nut.org.uk

"I can't be the teacher I want to be."

Danielle said the most vulnerable children would suffer most. "We have children from Syria who can't speak English," she said.

"The number of children here who need English as an Additional Language support is higher than average."

"Yet we only have one person providing it."

Lifelong

"Children with special educational needs are having support cut too. This will have a lifelong impact."

The school spends around 10 percent of its budget financing a Private Finance Initiative debt.

Many strikers want the council to step in and help to renegotiate the debt.

Maths teacher Chelston said, "That money should be going into the school."

"For it to be going to private firms is outrageous."

NUT members have called nine more days of strikes. NUT members at Plumstead Manor School, in nearby Greenwich, also plan strikes on 16, 17, 24 and 25 May.

The cuts are a national issue and unions must have a national response.

As Rachel put it, "My concern is that this is happening before the funding formula cuts come in."

"I think it has to come to national strikes."

Protest to stop the cuts

PROTESTS against school funding cuts are planned in Bristol, Sheffield, Manchester and Leamington on Saturday 20 May.

Another is organised in Newcastle for the following Saturday.

In London, teachers and parents plan to protest at Old Palace Yard near parliament on Thursday 18 May.

In Bristol,

parents have helped to distribute around 20,000 leaflets to schools to publicise the protest.

An anti-cuts meeting was set to take place in the constituency of the city's only Tory MP on Thursday of this week.

Last week some 300 people met in Worthing, Sussex, to oppose the cuts.

Parents have also called a day of protests on Friday 26 May, before schools finish for half term.



Sustained pay strikes hit college bosses hard

Workers are focusing on Scottish ministers in their fight to defend a pay deal, says Raymie Kiernan

COLLEGE BOSSES in Scotland are digging in for a fight. They are refusing to honour a pay deal struck with over 4,600 EIS Fela union lecturers across 20 further education (FE) colleges.

But the lecturers' mood is hardening. They held their second walkout in seven days last Wednesday and struck again on Tuesday of this week.

A further strike was set for Thursday.

The Scottish National Party (SNP) will be feeling the heat.

It promised a return to national bargaining six years ago but it took a mass strike last year to force a deal. Bosses are now reneging on that and workers are focusing on SNP ministers.

Jim is the EIS Fela branch secretary at City of Glasgow college. He explained to Socialist Worker, "College chairs are directly responsible to Scottish ministers. But principals see a national deal compromising their autonomy."

"They want to keep running colleges like their own personal property, spending public money. That's why the government needs to act."

On the picket at Langside, south Glasgow, lecturers were dismayed at college bosses' attitude. One striker said, "All we want is to be treated fairly. It often feels like FE is the forgotten sector."

Banked

Hairdressing lecturer Joanne was furious. She told Socialist Worker, "We can't believe the money is 'banked' but management are keeping it tucked away and don't want to share it."

Bosses are still trying to paint lecturers as greedy. Jim said, "It's quite ironic, given the pay rises principals have had for years."

"The salary of our principal is 90 percent higher in real terms than in 1993. Over the same period lecturers saw a 10 percent real terms decrease in pay."

Bosses' attacks on conditions

BACK STORY

College lecturers in Scotland are staging a series of pay strikes

- The EIS Fela union members are demanding that bosses honour a deal agreed last year
- The deal saw bosses promise to address the £12,000 a year gap between lecturers
- But now bosses want cuts to annual leave, preparation and marking time, and longer hours
- Strikers are angry at the SNP, which promised a return to national bargaining six years ago

would lead to deteriorating standards for students. One Lanarkshire student urged students to "build support for the picket lines nationally".

Solidarity between students and workers can strengthen the lecturers' struggle and defend further education generally.

Similarly, calling a national demonstration can draw in wider layers of support.

The EIS should call this and find more ways to involve its members in actively building political pressure on the SNP to strengthen its industrial dispute.

As general secretary Larry Flanagan explained, this can also strengthen the trade unions. He told the strike rally that EIS Fela membership was at a "five-year high—that's what happens when you make a stand".

He said, "You are the frontline of the fight to defend public sector education, against the anti-union laws and workplace injustice."

"We're not going to stop pressuring politicians in the next six weeks."

"The Scottish government needs to maximise its influence over Colleges Scotland and get them to honour the deal."

Urgent appeal for solidarity with EIS Fela strikers—go to bit.ly/2qTORnU to donate or for more information



COLLEGE LECTURERS on strike last week

PICTURE: DUNCAN BROWN

Tories gain in Scottish elections, but not enough to beat the dominant SNP

THE TORIES came second in last week's Scottish local council elections and proclaimed themselves the sole winners.

There is no doubt that the Tories had a good election in Scotland.

But they're still less popular in Scotland than they were under hated former leader Margaret Thatcher.

And the Scottish National Party (SNP) easily topped the poll with 431 seats. The Tories' 276 seats came mainly at Labour's expense, not the SNP's.

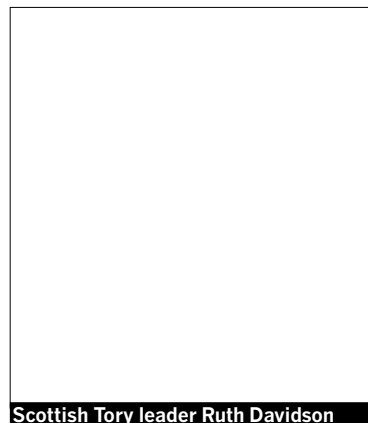
The Tories gained by successfully posing as the party of the British union, and to a lesser extent the party of Brexit. "Only the Tories could stop another independence referendum," was their key argument.

Rejection

But was the vote the resounding rejection of independence that much of the media claimed?

If that was true, the 17 council areas with higher than average No votes in the 2014 referendum should have recorded losses for the SNP. Only ten of them did.

And the 12 above average Yes areas in 2014 should have seen big



Scottish Tory leader Ruth Davidson

gains for the SNP. But in four of them it suffered losses.

The common thread between these losses for the SNP is that it was the majority party—or part of a coalition council—making cuts.

It is also implementing austerity as the Scottish government.

The SNP emerged as the largest party in nine councils in the 2012 council elections. Only four of these were the same this time.

The SNP is now the largest party in 16 councils, overtaking Labour in many of them.

But the big shift was from

Labour to Tory. Labour lost heaviest in the big cities and working class areas. In only one out of 32 councils did Labour move forward—and it only gained one seat.

Labour lost around ten seats or more in seven councils, including Glasgow and Edinburgh. Of these, only in Glasgow did the SNP gain more than the Tories.

Suffer

And only in Edinburgh, where the SNP ran the council along with Labour, did the SNP suffer a loss.

Independence was a big factor in the election, and will be again on 8 June. But it's foolish to think it is the only dynamic at play.

In truth there was not a huge change in terms of the proportion of seats held by pro or anti independence parties.

The danger is the general election in Scotland is fought purely on whether you support "nationalists" or "unionists".

Neither represent working class interests. The more socialists can make the debate about class and rejecting Tory rule as well as independence the better it will be for the struggles after the election.



US Republicans lead assault on healthcare with new repeal bill

Donald Trump's US government is pushing through healthcare attacks, but mobilising on the streets can beat them back, reports **Alistair Farrow**

THE HORROR show of US healthcare entered one of its darkest chapters last week. The Republican Party has pushed the repeal of the Affordable Care Act through the House of Representatives.

The bill is yet to be voted on by the Senate.

Obamacare was flawed to begin with. And the compromises made to push it through the US legislature left millions cut off from the limited protections it offered.

But the repeal bill, the American Health Care Act (AHCA), is a wholesale assault on the social aspects of US healthcare that exist.

It is a victory for the right wing of the Republican Party, such as the Freedom Caucus that overturned the first version of the AHCA.

This version is even more vicious. It will cut Medicaid by more than £600 billion over the next ten years.

Insurance

The Congressional Budget Office estimated that the bill would leave 24 million people without insurance in ten years time if passed.

It will mean 129 million people with some form of medical condition could see their insurance premiums increase far beyond what they can afford.

It also means that insurance companies can say that a wide range of medical problems are "pre-existing conditions". Meaning people may not be able to file claims for them.

These include sexual assault, domestic abuse and rape.

Republican congressperson Mo Brooks tried to justify the move by saying that "those people who lead

BACK STORY

The Republicans want to make healthcare more expensive

- Their bill will mean 129 million people could see their health insurance become unaffordable
- The legislation must pass through both congress and the senate in the same form before being signed by the president
- The movement should not rely on manoeuvres at the top

good lives...they've done the things to keep their bodies healthy".

Employers in the US with over 50 workers are supposed to provide a health insurance plan for them. The AHCA will mean that these requirements are dropped, leaving millions of people looking for insurance on the private market.

The changes will also mean that states will decide whether insurance plans need to cover the costs of check-ups and other standard procedures.

The Trump administration wants to drive the market into most aspects of US society.

The movement that sprung up around town hall meetings during the first Obamacare repeal bill has been reignited (see below). And health campaigners are joining others fighting Trump's attacks.

That's the way the movement can win.

On other pages...

French election solved nothing for ruling class in crisis >>> **Pages 14&15**

Mobilise against the right

PROTESTS TOOK place in over 50 cities and towns across the US on Monday.

They were called by the Women's March organisation that was behind the huge protests that followed Donald Trump's inauguration.

People used the mobilisation to push back against the attacks coming from the White House.

In cities such as San Francisco, Los Angeles, San Antonio, Virginia Beach and Normal in the state of Illinois,

activists held protests against the repeal of Obamacare.

In other places people held protests outside senators' local meetings with stalls for people to sign the Women's March "declaration of liberation".

Meanwhile the Harvest Movement is building up to its most serious action yet—a seven day strike.

The Harvest Movement is the migrant workers' organisation behind the Day Without Immigrants protests on 1 May.

MASS MOBILISATIONS by the right in Venezuela have provoked a fresh political crisis

While Donald Trump plays imperialist games the right mobilises in Venezuela

by **DAVE SEWELL**

MASS, VIOLENT protests by the right wing have provoked a political crisis in Venezuela for the second time in three years.

President Nicolas Maduro, the heir to Hugo Chavez, now plans to rewrite the constitution.

Venezuela's economy, centred on oil exports, has been in a tailspin since the collapse in world oil prices in 2014.

Inflation is at 400 percent, and the national debt is rocketing towards bankruptcy. This means severe shortages of essentials.

But the right wing opposition can only make things worse.

Its protests have consisted of roadblocks, setting fires and smashing public buildings, street fighting and even assassinations.

Right wing Venezuelan journalist Hugo Prieto hinted at their agenda in the New York

Times newspaper. He wrote that "the alternative would be a military intervention to install a national unity government".

US president Donald Trump said he would look into wide-ranging sanctions on Venezuela's economy.

Dominated

Sanctions could revive US control in a region it once dominated through client dictatorships.

There have been large pro-government demonstrations too.

But these come alongside reports of mobilisations from poorer, historically pro-Chavez, areas joining the opposition movement.

Maduro has few answers to the crisis. A 60 percent minimum wage increase announced on May Day means little in the face of hyperinflation and the black market.

His main strategy has been repression. He has put troops

on the streets, arbitrarily jailed people without trial, and hired paramilitary terror groups.

Maduro has now announced a constituent assembly to rewrite the constitution.

Maduro has said that the assembly will be "made up of workers". But it is likely to be dominated by his supporters.

Much of the international media have reported Venezuela's troubles with glee—"proof" that socialism doesn't work.

But under Chavez and Maduro Venezuela's economy remained dominated by capitalist competition and the chaos of the markets.

The problem in Venezuela was not too much socialism—but not enough.

More online ...

For a longer version of this article go to bit.ly/2pYqnJd

Fight the Zionists

THE CAMPAIGN Against Antisemitism (CAA) is a well organised network that tries to pressurise government bodies and institutions to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of antisemitism.

That definition argues that criticism of Israel and “denial of Jewish self-determination” are examples of antisemitism.

Recently the network has written to every university in Britain asking them to sign up to the definition.

If they are successful it would mean a grave threat to the pro-Palestine movement.

But to date most universities have refused to sign up.

This creates an opening for the Palestine solidarity movement. We need to organise students and campus unions to defend BDS and our right to free speech.

Michael Lavalette
Preston

McDonnell's homecoming

THERE WAS a packed crowd to hear John McDonnell speak in Liverpool on 28 April.

As he took to the podium people unfurled a banner with emblems of the Hillsborough, Orgreave and blacklist campaigns on it.

He said he was proud to be back in Liverpool. He also highlighted how working class areas have taken the brunt of Tory cuts and how people are suffering under this vile government.

The importance of a Labour victory was not lost on the audience.

Alan McShane
Blackburn



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

We ruined May's day—chase the Tories wherever they go

WE FOUND out that Theresa May was going to be in Bristol and organised to go down and protest outside. A few of us students from the university went.

People from the area joined us after we told them what was happening. Some Corbyn supporters also came down with us.

I'd say about half the people who joined the protest were from the local area.

We caught a glimpse of May walking out of building. Everyone was booing as she came out with her entourage. We were trying to demoralise them.

I found it quite politically moving. It showed there are still places Tories aren't welcome. That's promising.

I spoke to two people after May drove off. It was shocking that people in the area were unaware that May was visiting. It shows the Tory government's thinking.

They're going to places to “meet the public” but doing it in secret and ignoring the ordinary people in the area.

You had to be a Tory member to go in and had to show your party membership card.

She doesn't represent ordinary people, she represents the elite.

In Bristol there's an anti-cuts demo on 13 May and another on 20 May. These kind of stunts can feed into protests like that and build people's confidence to challenge racism and austerity.

At the rate we're going people will become even more aware of what is happening.

Jim Shay
Bristol

● MY KIDS went to the local secondary school near to where May held her event. It had a recent rebuild paid for on PFI and is now facing cuts of some £250,000.

What is the point of a new

school if you can't afford to pay teachers?

May's audience of Tories were drafted in from rich areas. Locals were barred.

When May left the hall, a number of local women tried to block the road.

Austerity is hammering millions of ordinary people. We need to fan the flames of resistance.

Right wing Labour MPs have refused to fight austerity.

We have to lead the way and show how it is done.

On 20 May we have a mass protest in Bristol against school cuts. We need to turn it into a mass protest not just against cuts in schools and hospitals, but also against austerity and the Tories and their billionaire friends.

Get out there, be angry and inspire those who hate the Tories to fight back.

Pete Wearden
Bristol

Just a thought...

Stop racist NHS checks

THE TORIES' message to keep migrants out of hospital is a blatant attempt to cause divisions within the working class.

At the same time they want to save money.

If we all stand up to them and expose their lies and trickery, we can get them on the retreat.

Nick Browne
on Facebook

Tory education cuts in trouble

WE CAN push the Tories back over their school cuts.

Even Tory MPs are beginning to realise how politically toxic the new funding formula is.

Over 12 of them have broken ground to criticise May over it.

While it's partly an attack on Theresa May from George Osborne and that wing of the party, it also shows that the Tories are weaker and more divided than they let on.

Juliette Nevin
Spalding

Solidarity forever

WE'RE FIGHTING for the education rights and opportunities that all students deserve.

Forest Hill School NUT
on Twitter

● SOLIDARITY from Dublin. Victory to the strikers.

PBP Crumlin
on Twitter

Mental health crisis is real

YOU WON'T see a politician or trade union leader taking time off for depression.

A quarter of the British population are expected to experience a mental health illness at some point in their lives.

We are as far away as ever from treating those with a mental health problems the same as people with physical impairments.

John Curtis
Ipswich

A 'progressive' step backward

LIB DEMS progressive? Just another mainstream political party out for the same old, same old.

Ronald McIntosh
on Twitter

Justice for Alton Sterling and Jordan Edwards, killed by cops

TWO MORE examples of police brutality and immunity from justice have emerged over the last week here in the US.

First, the Department of Justice decided last week not to prosecute the police killers of Alton Sterling.

Alton was shot after being restrained by two police officers in a car park in Baton Rouge,

Louisiana.

The latest tragedy is the killing of 15 year old Jordan Edwards by a police officer.

Jordan was leaving a party in a car when Roy Oliver shot and killed him.

Oliver said Jordan had been “reversing aggressively”, a statement later proven to be false by

video recordings.

The officer was fired and the District Attorney has decided to charge him with murder.

Firing the officer was not enough. There needs to be justice for Jordan Edwards.

Both of these incidents show the system does not have any moral values when it comes to the

oppression of black people.

We need justice by any means necessary.

We want the family to know they are not alone in this fight for justice.

I'm reminded of the words of Dr Martin Luther King, “I know you are asking today, ‘How long will it take?’

“I come to say to you this afternoon, however

difficult the moment, however frustrating the hour, it will not be long, because truth crushed to earth will rise again.

“How long? Not long, because no lie can live forever.

“How long? Not long, because you shall reap what you sow.”

Sonya Patrick
Wilimington, North Carolina

IN THIS WEEK
1977

Mass protest beats attack on abortion

by SADIE ROBINSON

FORTY YEARS ago this month some 10,000 people marched in London to defend abortion rights. The demonstration, organised by the National Abortion Campaign (NAC), opposed a bill brought by Tory MP William Benyon.

At the time, women could access abortion services up to 28 weeks into pregnancy, if they met certain conditions. The Benyon Bill would have slashed this to 20 weeks. It would have given police power to access the medical records and addresses of women who had pregnancy tests, pregnancy advice or abortions. Fines would have risen to a maximum of £1,000.

Local NAC groups produced leaflets explaining how the attacks would affect working class women, and urging support for the protest on 14 May.

One Glasgow NAC leaflet pointed out that many women already faced barriers accessing abortion services because of doctors' "personal views".

It said the Benyon Bill "would lead to more illegal abortions and unwanted children".

Some groups described how things were before the 1967 Abortion Act. Then abortion had been illegal, although rich women were able to access it.

Unsafe

Some 4,000 women died in Britain as a result of unsafe, illegal abortions in 1966.

Sheffield NAC's newsletter quoted women describing the days of "backstreet abortions".

One woman said, "There were a lot of women died, a lot of women were ruined through it. They don't do that unless they're desperate."

Another said, "Many performed [the abortion] on themselves. They used knitting needles, they used syringes, slippery elm bark.

“We are not content to confine our activity to writing to or lobbying our MPs



Marchers in May 1977

They used to use soap and water enemas, and they used sticks—with the most disastrous results."

The protest was publicised with the slogan, "Don't make 1977 the year of the knitting needle!"

Motions

The Labour Party and the TUC had passed motions opposing any restrictions on abortion rights at their conferences.

Individual Labour MPs pledged to support the march. But many wrote to organisers regretting that they wouldn't be there.

In contrast, several trade union branches confirmed that they would send a delegation and donated to the campaign.

The march was a staging post in bringing unions into the movement for abortion rights. They would come to play a key role—after much argument.

In the event some 10,000 people came onto the streets. It was part of a year of campaigning for the right to choose.

Five women made national headlines when they threw stink bombs at MPs in parliament during a reading of Benyon's bill.

The NAC said its aim was to build "a mass campaign for a woman's right to choose". One leaflet read, "We are not content simply to confine our activity to writing to or lobbying our MPs."

Yet the NAC didn't always support initiatives from socialists and others, such as to hold pickets of anti-choice group Spuc. Benyon's bill failed. But the anti-choice bigots continued their battle to take away women's rights. In 1979 a TUC protest of 80,000 was key to beating back the Corrie Bill, which again tried to cut the abortion time limit.

Campaigns based on mass activity by ordinary people can stop bigots taking us backwards.

THEY'VE GOT THE MONEY



The Tories tell us we can't afford to spend on public services. That's a bit rich, writes Charlie Kimber

THE FIGURES detailed in the Sunday Times Rich list published last weekend should be central to all the election debates.

They explode the myth that there's "not enough money" for jobs and services.

There's plenty—it's just in the wrong hands.

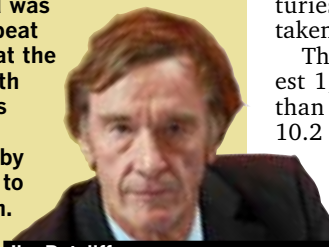
The total wealth of Britain's 1,000 richest individuals and families has soared to £658 billion, a 14 percent rise on last year. It was an increase of £226 million a day.

The combined wealth of the top 500 is £580 billion, more than the £576 billion total wealth of the 1,000 richest people in 2016.

Theresa May is fighting the election in defence of the system that

Oily union-buster

JIM RATCLIFFE of Ineos, who took on and was allowed to beat the unions at the Grangemouth refinery, has seen his wealth rise by £2.5 billion to £5.75 billion.



Jim Ratcliffe

Sucking up profit

SIR JAMES DYSON's fortune shot up from £2.8 billion to £7.8 billion in just one year.



Sir James Dyson

produces this obscene wealth at one end of society and people having to use food banks at the other.

This week Labour unveiled its very modest aim of increasing taxation for people who have incomes over £80,000 a year—the top 5 percent.

Income tax should be much higher for the rich (see right).

But wealth (the stock of money accumulated over decades or centuries) should also be taxed—and taken for the good of all.

The Equality Trust said, "The richest 1,000 people own more wealth than 40 percent of households, or 10.2 million families."

In 2009, as the financial crisis kicked in, the richest 1,000 were worth £258 billion.

Their wealth has more

than doubled between then and now.

Nothing touches the super-rich. Robert Watts, the Rich List's compiler, says, "While many of us worried about the outcome of the EU referendum, many of Britain's richest people just kept calm and carried on making billions."

There are 134 billionaires based in Britain, up 14 on last year. Vacuum cleaner magnate

Sir James Dyson is one of the year's biggest risers.

His fortune has increased by £2.8 billion in a year to £7.8 billion.

The increase alone is about what the government is seeking to slash from schools each year in England, leading to mass job losses and a worse education for millions of children.

Fifteen years ago, there were 21



Mike Ashley of Sports Direct and Philip Green of Top Shop

UK-based billionaires in the Rich List.

Dominic Lawson, the son of former Tory chancellor Nigel Lawson wrote in 2009, "If there is a bloody Bolshevik revolution in this country, I think I can guess the inflammatory pamphlet which will be waved by the people putting the wealthy up against the walls and shooting them."

"It will not be the Communist Manifesto. It will be the Sunday Times Rich List."

Let's hope it will be both!

Green with envy

THERE ARE losers in the list who are facing hard times for their crimes.

Sir Philip Green, the Topshop tycoon and yacht owner who left BHS pensioners short and Mike Ashley, who tried to justify Sports Direct's vicious working practices, are jointly down more than £700 million.

Sir Philip and Lady Green are now having to make do with £2.8 billion, and Ashley a meagre £2.2 billion.

Labour is right to raise income tax

VERY WEALTHY people have had more wealth stuffed into their pockets by income tax cuts—again and again.

In 1973, the top rate of income tax, paid by the very rich, was 75 percent. Labour's right wing chancellor Denis Healey raised it to 83 percent in 1974.

For eight years of Margaret Thatcher's Tory government the top rate was 60 percent. Today it is 45 percent.

Official figures released at the end of April show:

The poorest 10 percent of households paid on average 42 percent of their income in

taxes (income tax, council tax, VAT etc) in 2015/16.

The richest 10 percent of households paid on average just 34.3 percent of their income in tax.

When the billionaires are paying less of their income in tax than their butlers, it's definitely time for change.

Young man with old money lords it over us

The new Duke of Westminster—"Hughie" to his friends—is head of the Grosvenor family, whose land and property empire includes 300 acres of central London, 165,000 acres of British countryside and property across Europe, Asia and the Americas. It is part of a total wealth of £9.5 billion.

The 26 year old duke has achieved all this by being born and, in particular, being born a man.

The Grosvenor family grabbed Eaton Hall in Cheshire in the 1440s. But the really big money came in 1677 when Sir Thomas Grosvenor married Mary Davies, a 12-year-old heiress whose plot of swamp and orchards to the west of London

would one day become Mayfair and Belgravia.

Nine months ago, Hughie became the youngest duke of Westminster

“The family, like most aristocratic families, does not pay inheritance tax

since the title was created more than 250 years ago, after the death of his father.

Lady Tamara is 11 years older than him, but didn't become the duke because, well, she's a woman.

His 21st birthday bash was a dinner and disco at Eaton Hall with hundreds of guests, including Prince Harry. The party was said to have cost £5 million.

What about tax? The Sunday Times comments, "The Grosvenors' trust structure ensures the family, like most other aristocratic families, does not pay inheritance tax."

Safes and houses

HOUSING CRISIS? Not for the super rich.

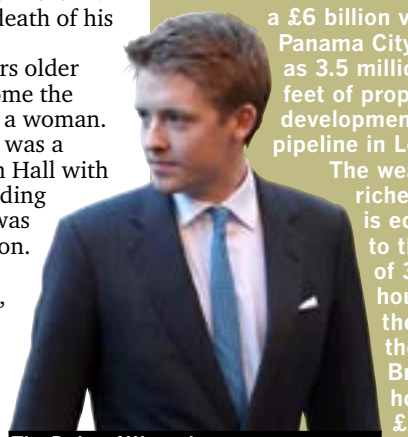
Brothers Ian and Richard Livingstone have plenty of places to put the homeless.

They own hotels in Monte Carlo, Barbados and Ibiza, as well as London's Park Lane Hilton.

They also hold the hotel lease at the stately home Cliveden House in Berkshire.

Richard and Ian have a £6 billion venture in Panama City as well as 3.5 million square feet of property developments in the pipeline in London.

The wealth of the richest 1,000 is equivalent to the value of 3,018,853 houses at the cost of the average British house—£218,000.



The Duke of Westminster

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

DONCASTER

Can Jeremy Corbyn win the general election?

Wed 17 May, 4.30pm,
The Women's Centre
(Changing Lives),
5 Princes St,
DN1 3NJ

LONDON: NORTH

Racism, resistance and revolution

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
St John Vianney Church Hall,
386 West Green Rd
(corner Vincent Rd),
N15 3QH

PORTSMOUTH

Racism, resistance and revolution

Wed 24 May, 7.30pm,
Somerstown
Community Centre,
River's St,
PO5 4EZ

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

BIRMINGHAM: CITY CENTRE

Racism, resistance and revolution

Wed 17 May, 7pm,
Birmingham LGBT Centre,
38/40 Holloway Circus,
B1 1EQ

BOLTON

The case against borders

Thu 18 May, 7pm,
Bolton Socialist Club,
16 Wood St (off
Bradshawgate),
BL1 1DY

BRADFORD

How to get rid of the Tories

Thu 25 May, 7pm,
Glyde House,
Little Horton Lane
(opposite the ice rink),
BD5 0BQ

BRIGHTON

How do we build a campaign to stop climate change?

Thu 18 May, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
22 School Ln,
L1 3BT

LONDON: BRIXTON

Deliveroo, Uber and the gig economy—is the working class disappearing?

Wed 17 May, 7pm,
Vida Walsh Centre,
2b Saltoun Rd (near Effra Rd,
facing Windrush Square),
SW2 1EP

LONDON: CENTRAL

Islamophobia today

Thu 18 May, 6.30pm,
Room 130, UCL, Foster
Court Building,
WC1E 6BT

CARDIFF

Soviets or parliament—socialism and democracy

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
New York Diner,
CF24 3BQ

CHESTERFIELD

Socialists and elections

Thu 18 May, 7.30pm,
Chesterfield Library,
New Beetwell St, S40 1QN

EDINBURGH

War and imperialism in the Trump era

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
7 Victoria St, EH1 2JL

GLASGOW

The gig economy—is it changing the working class?

Thu 18 May, 7pm,
Avant Garde,
33-44 King St,
Merchant City, G1 5QT

HUDDERSFIELD

Fake news and alternative facts—media in the 21st century

Wed 17 May, 6.30pm,
Brian Jackson House,
2 New North Parade (near
both train and bus stations),
HD1 5JP

SOCIALIST WORKER PUBLIC MEETINGS

France's new president Emmanuel Macron is out to attack working class people

After the presidential election—where next for France?

ABERDEEN

Wed 17 May, 6pm,
Belmont Cinema Cafe,
49 Belmont St,
AB10 1JS

COLCHESTER

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
The Odd One Out,
28 Mersea Rd,
CO2 7ET

DUNDEE

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
Dundee Voluntary Action,
10 Constitution Rd,
DD1 1LL

HULL

Thu 18 May, 7pm,
Cafe licious,
104 Cottingham Rd,
HU6 7RZ

LEICESTER

Thu 18 May, 7pm,
Leicester LGBT Centre,
15 Wellington St, LE1 6HH

LONDON: BRENT AND HARROW

Thu 18 May, 7.30pm,
The Pepperpot Centre,
1a Thorpe Close,
Ladbroke Grove, W10 5XL

PLYMOUTH

Thu 18 May, 7pm,
Quaker House,
74 Mutley Plain, PL4 6LF

TELFORD

Thu 1 Jun, 7.30pm,
Carriages,
The Parade,
Wellington,
TF1 1PY

WOLVERHAMPTON AND WALSALL

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
Wild Bytes Cafe
(next to the
Post Office)
Darlington St,
WV1 4HW

LEEDS: CITY CENTRE

Racism, resistance and revolution

Thu 18 May, 7pm,
The Swarthmore
Education Centre,
2-7 Woodhouse Square,
LS3 1AD

LIVERPOOL

Can Corbyn win the general election?

Thu 18 May, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
22 School Ln,
L1 3BT

LONDON: BRIXTON

Deliveroo, Uber and the gig economy—is the working class disappearing?

Wed 17 May, 7pm,
Vida Walsh Centre,
2b Saltoun Rd (near Effra Rd,
facing Windrush Square),
SW2 1EP

LONDON: CENTRAL

Islamophobia today

Thu 18 May, 6.30pm,
Room 130, UCL, Foster
Court Building,
WC1E 6BT

LONDON: EALING

What's happening in South Africa

Thu 18 May, 7.30pm,
Y Lounge, YMCA
West London,
25 St Mary's Rd, W5 2RE

LONDON: HACKNEY

40 years on from the Benyon Bill—why we defend a woman's right to choose

Thu 18 May, 7.30pm,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Rd, E5 0PU

LONDON: LEWISHAM

Trump and the drive to war—is US imperialism out of control?

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
West Greenwich Community
and Arts Centre,
141 Greenwich High Rd,
SE10 8JA

LONDON: NEWHAM

Deliveroo, Uber and the gig economy—is the working class disappearing?

Wed 17 May, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove, E15 1HP

LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

Trump and the drive to war—is US imperialism out of control?

Wed 17 May, 7pm,
Oxford House,
Derbyshire St (opposite
Bethnal Green Rd Tesco),
E2 6HG

MANCHESTER: CHORLTON

Antisemitism, Zionism, Labour and the left

Wed 17 May, 7pm,
Chorlton Library (side door),
Manchester Rd,
M21 9PN

MANCHESTER: CITY CENTRE

Marxism and alienation

Thu 18 May, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St,
M2 5NS

MEDWAY

Trump and the drive to war—is US imperialism out of control?

Thu 18 May, 7.30pm,
Nucleus Arts Centre
(Conference Room),
272 High St, ME4 4BP

NEWCASTLE

Reform or revolution?

Thu 18 May, 7pm,
Broadacre House,
Market St,
NE1 6HQ

NORWICH

Can Corbyn win the general election?

Thu 18 May, 7.30pm,
Vauxhall Centre,
Johnson Place,
NR2 2SA

NOTTINGHAM

Should the left be part of a 'progressive alliance'?

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
Nottinghamshire
YMCA International
Community Centre,
61b Mansfield Rd,
NG1 3FN

OXFORD

Trump and the drive to war—is US imperialism out of control?

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
Restore,
Manzil Way (off Cowley Rd),
OX4 1YH

POOLE AND DORCHESTER

Can Corbyn win the general election?

Mon 15 May, 7pm,
Butler & Hops,
88 High St, BH15 1DB

PORTSMOUTH

The politics of food

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
Somerstown
Community Centre,
River's St,
PO5 4EZ

SHEFFIELD: CITY CENTRE

Crisis in Turkey—is democracy under threat?

Thu 18 May, 7pm,
Central United
Reformed Church,
60 Norfolk St (near Crucible
Theatre), S1 2JB

SOUTHAMPTON

The case against borders

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
Central Baptist Church Hall,
Devonshire Rd, SO15 2GY

WIGAN

Racism, resistance and revolution

Wed 17 May, 7pm,
Little Fifteen pub,
17-19 Wallgate (opposite
Wigan Post Office), WN1 1LD

YORK

What Is Zionism?

Wed 17 May, 7.30pm,
Sea Horse Hotel,
4 Fawcett St,
YO10 4AH

{ MOVEMENT EVENTS }

DORCHESTER

The case against borders

Sat 3 Jun, 1.30pm,
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Ancient gods fight for their place in the modern world

Fans of Neil Gaiman's novel *American Gods* and newcomers alike will find the audacious new TV adaptation worth watching, argues **Iven Boldon**

FROM THE opening scene of *American Gods* the tone is set for the online adaptation of writer Neil Gaiman's much-loved magnum opus.

It's a dark world populated with a diverse set of ancient gods, brought to the Amercias by migrants, settlers and slaves from across the world and then abandoned as belief in them has subsided.

The show opens with a hardened Viking crew landing on the shores of North America centuries before it was colonised.

We see their struggle on the inhospitable shores against biting insects and unseen indigenous people, before they eventually flee back across the sea.

They leave behind them their warrior god.

In the present day Shadow Moon (Ricky Whittle) is halfway through a six year jail sentence, but is about to get released early.

Crash

Unfortunately Moon, who wanted to get back home, learns that his wife has died in a car crash.

Instead of a reunion, he only has her funeral to look forward to, where he'll later learn the circumstances of her death.

But Moon is soon flung into the world of gods and magic upon his unexpected encounter with Mr Wednesday (Ian McShane).

Mr Wednesday is the Norse god Odin.

He recruits Moon to drive his car, hurt his enemies and hold his vigil if he dies.

This is his first step into a dark and



A WORLD dominated by ancient gods such as the hammer-wielding Czernobog (Peter Stormare)

mysterious world that the audience will be following every step of the way along with him.

For those unfamiliar with the novel, the first episode leaves a lot of questions unanswered.

But as we learn about this world, and follow the story alongside Moon, all becomes clear.

There have been some subtle—and some more audacious—adaptations from the novel in the first episode.

Finished

But on the whole audiences should be pleased with the finished product.

The few changes have brought a modernised version of the novel to

screen, while remaining true to the original work.

In no other piece of fiction could those changes feel more apt and appropriate than in *American Gods*.

American Gods

Available to watch online on Amazon Prime

Play pokes fun at racist assumptions of 'Britishness'

THEATRE

OCTOPUS

Greenwich Theatre,
London SE10 8ES.
Tickets £11
Touring until 28 June
For details go to uktw.co.uk

WRITER Afsaneh Gray's play is a witty interrogation of "British identity" and racism.

The three women protagonists Sara, Scheherazade and Sarah have been hauled up to check their family background.

In the opening scenes

Scheherazade (Dilek Rose) and the government interviewer talk past each other.

There's no reasoning with racist immigration rules.

All three are loaded with their own liberal prejudices about what it means to be "British".

Sarah (Samara MacLaren) had gone on a fictional "Better Together" march for unity.

At the beginning she's at pains to tell Sara (Alexandra D'Sa), whose parents were from India, that she didn't vote for the



Interrogating 'British identity'

policy that has brought them to the interrogation room.

To her shock, middle class accountant Sara initially supports it.

By the end, the Guardian-style liberalism definitely comes off the worst as Sarah admits to looking at Muslims with backpacks with suspicion.

Through the process of going through interviews, the play satirically unpicks the characters' prejudices.

That's where its real strength lies, and by doing so it shows some of the reality of racism.

THEATRE

DIVINE CHAOS OF STARRY THINGS

by Paul Mason
White Bear Theatre,
London SE11 4DJ.
Until 20 May
whitebeartheatre.co.uk

PAUL MASON'S new play tells the story of Louise Michel's exile on the Pacific island of New Caledonia after the defeat of Paris Commune in 1871.

Michel was legendary for leading hundreds of women workers to take control of the French government's cannon on Montmartre hill at the start of the rising.

The play itself focuses on the defeat, exile and Michel's



Exiled Communards

support for a revolt by the native Kanaks.

This is an important subject for a play, but the actors struggle to breathe life into a script that's heavy on filling in the back story and light on dramatic tension.

For anyone interested in the Paris Commune, the play raises some interesting questions but suffers from a flat and overly didactic tone.

Colm Bryce

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Bestsellers at Bookmarks, the socialist Bookshop

- 1 **Russia 1917—workers' revolution and the festival of the oppressed**
Dave Sherry
- 2 **Sound system—the political power of music**
Dave Randall
- 3 **Sexism and the system—a rebel's guide to women's liberation**
Judith Orr
- 4 **Say it loud—Marxism and the fight against racism**
Brian Richardson
- 5 **1917—Russia's red year**
Tim Sanders and John Newsinger

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bookmarksbookshop.co.uk
Why not visit the shop at 1 Bloomsbury Street, London WC1B 3QE

LIBERAL technocrat and former banker Emmanuel Macron has been elected president of France, with over 20 million votes. Almost two thirds of his voters told pollsters they only did it to keep out his opponent, the fascist Marine Le Pen.

Le Pen of the Front National (FN) got over 10.5 million votes.

It's welcome and important that Le Pen lost.

But coming second hasn't removed the fascist threat. Le Pen won three million more votes than in the first round last month, and some five million more than her father and predecessor did in 2002.

Parliamentary elections next month could see the FN win many more MPs than the two it has at present.

Over 16 million people either stayed away from the election or cast blank or spoiled votes. It was the highest rate of abstention since 1969.

But Macron will now seek to form a government to attack workers' rights.

He has vowed to introduce "reforms" that go even further than the Labour Law passed by the outgoing Socialist Party (PS) government under Francois Hollande.

That reform was opposed by 70 percent of the population. To pass it, Hollande's government had to suspend voting in parliament.

So it's no surprise that Macron has said he too will, if necessary, govern by decree instead of through a parliamentary majority in order to take the attack further—but there are limitations upon such power.

Unemployment

A succession of French governments have failed to drag the country out of economic stagnation.

The recovery from the 2008-9 global crisis has been slow and limited.

A new mini-recession hit just last year, and after a brief recovery growth is slowing.

Temporary jobs made up 85 percent of employment growth last year, most of them contracts lasting less than a month. Unemployment stands at 10 percent—rising to 23 percent among those under 24.

This age group voted the least for France's traditional parties in the first round of the election, with left winger Jean-Luc Melenchon coming

“Temporary jobs made up 85 percent of employment growth last year



President Emmanuel Macron spent part of the election telling workers how he planned to assault their rights

first and Le Pen second.

Since the 1990s the bosses have been rolling back the gains of the combative French workers' movement. As right wing former president Nicolas Sarkozy put it, the challenge has been to "liquidate once and for all the heritage of May '68".

But no government, including his, has been able to achieve that.

Mass strikes have won stalemates and costly, partial victories.

This has come at a political cost. The centre right has suffered for being so closely identified with the corrupt, arrogant rich at a time when ordinary people are suffering.

Francois Fillon, the homophobe who promised to do for France what Margaret Thatcher did for Britain, was no exception.

He campaigned for financial "restraint" and "family values"—then was revealed to have taken public money to pay his wife and children.

He became the first Tory candidate in decades not to reach the second round.

For Hollande's PS, doing the ruling class's dirty work meant going to war with its own base. It suffered a rout comparable to that of the Greek social democratic party Pasok.

Hollande stood down from seeking re-election after his approval rating plummeted to just 4 percent. PS voters flocked to Macron to the party's right or Melenchon to its left.

The party picked as its candidate a backbench rebel pledging to abolish Hollande's legacy—and got less than 7 percent of the vote.

Party general secretary Jean-Christophe Cambadélis said it is "dead and truly dead", at least in its current form. Hollande's prime minister, thuggish Islamophobe Manuel Valls, called the election "the end of the story" for the PS.

As a candidate Macron sold himself as an "outsider" capable of rising above the parties' limitations in order to finally



Waiting in the wings—Le Pen



AN ELECTION THAT SOLVED NOTHING

fulfil their task.

His campaign was all about what he wasn't, with a deliberate lack of detail about what he was. None of this can continue in office.

As president, Macron will have to lash together a government out of whatever MPs his online "movement" is able to elect and whoever will prop them up in coalition. It could be weaker and less stable than its predecessors while seeking to take their attacks further.

Hollande, Sarkozy and the previous president Jacques Chirac all came to rely on the policies of the far right to compensate for their weakening support.

They have attacked Muslims,

curtailed civil liberties, given more powers and more confidence to the police and put a "republican" form of nationalism at the heart of their politics. Though intended to compete with the FN, this only gave it openings to demand going further.

Audience

Macron will face the same problems as his predecessors. There's no reason to expect him to break with their strategy.

His neoliberal policies will continue to sow the fear, despair and resentment that gives the FN an audience.

And the FN has already succeeded in normalising itself in the eyes of the media and

other politicians, giving it an unprecedented platform.

It's shameful that Macron played his part in this by agreeing to a farcical debate with Le Pen—something even the racist Tory Jacques Chirac refused to do in 2002.

Without determined opposition the FN will continue to grow. And in the long term the frustration that has broken France's main parties and driven its governments to use emergency powers could make the FN attractive to France's rulers.

However, the election also showed a persistent hostility to Le Pen from much of the population. This could be mobilised into an anti-fascist movement to block the FN's growth.

A neoliberal president in office, all the main political parties in crisis—and fascists waiting in the wings. Dave Sewell says there'll be more French resistance to come

And Melenchon's high first-round vote revealed the appetite for a left alternative—though he offers it little direction other than voting for him.

Hollande's presidency left the trade union movement divided and weakened, torn over whether to fight his attacks or defend him rather than risk something worse.

But the inspiring movement against the Work Law last Spring began a process of renewal with a new generation of militant activists looking for answers.

Macron can expect resistance. But to stop the parade of anti-worker presidents and the looming fascist threat in the background, that resistance will have to develop into something more.



MUSLIMS ON the frontline—half of cops vote Le Pen

Fascists building a mass organisation

by DENIS GODARD

THE FASCIST threat in France is more significant than ever.

Fascism comes from two directions. One is the logic of the ruling class in a society which it struggles to regulate through compromises.

The nationalism, racism and authoritarianism we see in France is part of how fascism develops. It prepares the ground for fascism.

But fascism involves something more. It needs a fascist party that can mobilise part of the population and use it to discipline the rest of society.

That's what the FN is building. It already has millions of voters, hundreds of councillors, dozens of MEPs and two MPs.

People often think that a party is only fascist if you see black shirts, street violence and some sort of military organisation.

That's part of it. But for fascist parties to develop in the 1930s it also took a lot of building through elections, waging a battle of ideas and making and breaking alliances.

Finding violent gangs to build up fascist militia can be the easy part. In a period of crisis it

can be done very quickly—if the fascists have a mass audience and have built a mass organisation.

We've had some warnings of this from the FN in recent years.

It succeeded in organising a militia alongside farmers to fight environmental protesters. They blocked off the region, searched the vehicles that left and attacked those with activists in.

In the port of St Nazaire even some dockers in the CGT union organised a gang with FN members.

Unity

The FN has a significant audience in the police—more than 50 percent of officers vote for the party. These include many of the cops who held masked, wildcat marches led by an FN candidate last year.

The fascist threat is growing. It's a disgrace and a disaster that the left is not facing up to this—not least because we know the solution.

If we build unity in action between black, white and Arab workers, with young people, Muslims and non-Muslims, we have the strength to smash the fascists.

Denis is secretary of the New Anticapitalist Party's anti-racism and anti-fascism commission

READ MORE

● **For the Muslims: Islamophobia in France** by Edwy Plenel £7.99

● **How did France get here?**

by Jad Bouharoun <http://bit.ly/2pX7ypR>

Available at Bookmarks, Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



New works of art for a new kind of society

Exciting new forms of art appeared after the Russian Revolution—but fell out of favour when it was crushed

THE REVOLUTION of 1917 shook every aspect of Russian society and art was no exception.

The writers, painters, and architects who scorned the regime of the Tsars and opposed the First World War as senseless slaughter at last found a space into which they could inject their ideas.

Art, they declared, was no longer the plaything of the powerful. It was to be a means of educating and engaging with ordinary people, and a celebration of the modern world.

Their art wasn't just propaganda. They wanted to develop new methods for new audiences. This avant-garde was ruthless in its criticism of what went before.

Painters declared that "painting was dead" as a medium. Kazimir Malevich rejected the very idea of representational art and instead concentrated on "abstract truths".

Others, such as Alexander Rodchenko, believed that the emerging art of photography was now the way to capture the essence of the moment.

Transform

He was convinced that new photomontage techniques would transform the way people looked at the world.

"I want to make completely believable photos, the kind that never existed before, pictures that are so true to life that they are life itself," he wrote.

"I want my photographs to be at once simple and complex, so that they will shock and astound people."

Traditional sculpture was to be replaced with "construction", and applied to architecture.

The post-revolutionary work of designer El Lissitzky—famous for Beat the Whites with the Red Wedge—found favour across Europe. He was soon to become revolutionary



THE SPORTSMEN by Kazimir Malevich

1917 TIMELINE

1 May (14 May by modern calendar) The Petrograd Soviet votes in favor of a new Coalition Government

● The revolutionary Lenin had warned against the danger of this and the Bolshevik party condemned the decision

● Foreign minister Miliukov forced to resign the following day after it emerges he agreed to continue Russia's involvement in the First World War in secret

Russia's cultural ambassador to Weimar Germany, where he greatly influenced the emerging Bauhaus movement.

Gustav Klutis was among many who worked in many mediums. He made street corner art propaganda stalls. They showed films, played music and speeches, and displayed poster art.

But like the rest of the "Constructivist" new wave, he was obsessed with abstraction. So Klutis made propaganda dismissed as "crude" by Western critics.

“Revolutionary art sought to end the division between work and play

But in other work he went far beyond them, trying, for example, to depict planets moving through space, subject to rules of gravity and force.

No one thought of these works as merely propaganda. The Constructivists became so successful that the distinction between "popular" and "high art" started to break down.

Process

Art had become part of the process of building a new society but that meant that its fortunes were deeply intertwined with those of the revolution.

The end of the 1920s saw Russia exhausted by years of war and civil war. The working class that had taken power in 1917 was now decimated. State functionaries were all that remained of October.

Revolutionary art had urged the end of the distinction between work and play. It couldn't sit alongside economic five-year plans and labour camps.

What was needed now was art that helped people understand themselves as part of a benevolent machine.

The most revolutionary artists hid their old works. Some stopped producing altogether while others found favour in the new style of the day, "socialist realism".

The era of revolutionary art had passed.

This is part of a series of weekly articles on the Russian Revolution. Read our coverage at tinyurl.com/sw1917

Don't be fooled by Green Party liberals

by ALISTAIR FARROW

FOR MANY years the Greens—or at least some of them—seemed to be to the left of Labour.

During the 2015 general election campaign and the preceding years the Green Party positioned itself to the left of the austerity-lite offered by Ed Miliband's Labour.

Lots of people supported the pro-refugee, anti-austerity message the party put forward.

Its membership grew from some 28,000 in December 2014 to 63,000 in 2015. However, it dropped back down to 53,000 in 2016.

Support

The rise of Jeremy Corbyn to the leadership of the Labour Party led many of the Greens' newly-politicised members and voters to turn to Labour in support of him.

The party's rise and partial fall in membership has left the leadership scrambling to plug the leak.

The principal way they have decided to do this is



GREEN CO-LEADER Caroline Lucas on a benefits protest—but is she to the left of Jeremy Corbyn?

PICTURE: MARK THOMAS

by pushing the idea of a “progressive alliance”.

The Greens have placed themselves at the head of an anti-Brexit coalition including Liberal Democrats and elements of the Labour right.

Such a policy could rehabilitate the Lib Dems after

their five years propping up a Tory government, and give them a fake leftish gloss.

Co-leader of the Green Party Caroline Lucas attacked the Labour leadership on Tuesday of last week for refusing to be part of a “progressive alliance” with the

Greens and the Lib Dems.

Lucas argued that Labour “have a responsibility to protect people in this country from the worst of harsh, cruel Tory policy.”

“The fact they won't even sit down and talk about it from the top is a real betrayal

of people. The absence of real principle is desperately disappointing.”

By doing this she has placed herself to the right of Corbyn and lost the right to expect radicals and socialists to vote Green.

The Greens' number

one target seat is in Bristol West—a Labour seat.

There have always been some counter-arguments to voting Green. It is not in any sense a class-based party or linked to the trade unions.

Cuts

In office Greens have shown that they can implement cuts as effectively as any mainstream party.

In Brighton in 2014 they tried to push through pay cuts of £4,000 a year for bin workers.

Lucas did not support the attacks, but the perpetrators weren't driven out of the party.

In Leeds council in 2011 the Greens entered a coalition with the Tories and Lib Dems, pushing through vicious cuts.

In Scotland the Greens did vote for another independence referendum, enabling it to be passed by the Scottish parliament. But they have not blocked the Scottish National Party's cuts.

The Greens' progressive face has slipped away. We should vote Labour in England and Wales, not Green.

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Disabled person's suicide shows the Tories' cruelty

Government welfare 'reforms' are having deadly consequences for disabled people. **Eleanor Claxton-Mayer** investigates the devastation of the cuts

A 67 year old disabled man set himself on fire outside a job centre after his benefits were cut, an inquest heard last week.

Peter Sherwood told a mental health team about his intention to kill himself just hours before doing it.

After Disability Living Allowance was cut, Peter was told to apply for Personal Independence Payment (Pip) in 2015 (see below).

Unfortunately, Peter's case is far from unique.

According to the government's own figures, thousands of disabled people died within six weeks of being found fit to work under the Work Capability Assessment (WCA).

Jayne, a disabled Pip claimant, told Socialist Worker, "When my condition worsened I was assessed by a paramedic at my Pip reassessment."

"I was depressed and suicidal. The paramedic thought it was a good idea to compare what I was feeling to finding dead bodies—it was very graphic."

"It wasn't about asking 'why do you feel like this', but was aimed at 'let's see if we can scare her away'."

These WCA interviews are carried out by private subcontractors such as Atos, Capita and Maximus. There are

Even some who are terminally ill have been judged 'fit for work'

reports of interviewers asking benefit claimants with mental health issues, "Why haven't you killed yourself yet?" A staggering 65 percent of Pip decisions that go to appeal are overturned.

Research by Oxford and Liverpool Universities found that 590 additional suicides between 2010 and 2013 were associated with the WCA's introduction.

So were 279 cases of mental ill health and 725,000 more prescriptions for antidepressants.

Slashed

The Tories also slashed employment support allowance (ESA) from £103 to £73 last year.

A number of Freedom of Information requests have showed that over 50,000 people died soon after being removed from ESA.

This means they were judged to be fit for work within a year.

Even some people with terminal illnesses are deemed "fit to work".

The Tories have further drastically changed the test for the mobility component of disability benefits.

This has meant that over 50,000 people have lost their mobility vehicles—including mobility cars, scooters and specialist wheelchairs.

Vicki, a disability advocate, explained to Socialist Worker what this means.

"If you are not found to have the highest mobility needs then your wheelchair is taken," she said.

"That means you are bedbound—that's the reality."

The Tories' attacks on benefits are pushing people into poverty, causing distress and desperation that can have fatal consequences.



DISABLED PEOPLE Against the Cuts protesting against the Tories' attacks outside parliament last week

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER



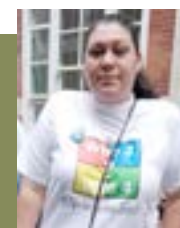
Nathan
claimant in Wales

THE Welsh government introduced the Welsh Independent Living Grant (WILG) for two years and then had a consultation.

All disabled people voted for it, but they completely ignored the consultation.

When I saw my social worker two years ago, she said that without WILG my hours of care would be more than halved.

I'm just left in fear.



Vicki disability advocate

IWORK as a disability advocate and have an impairment myself.

It's wrong that people are so desperate they have to ring up crying because of the cuts.

Meanwhile MPs went and gave themselves a massive pay rise when they're cutting money to us.



Jamie
disabled claimant

IWAITED six months to get assessed for my current wheelchair.

My condition worsened and I asked for a referral last June but didn't see someone until January.

They brought this wheelchair round. Three weeks ago they said because I wasn't using it indoors, I don't qualify.

Don't buy government spin about benefit 'savings'

THE TORIES have long sought to push through "welfare reforms" aimed at slashing support from those who need it.

The government scrapped Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and replaced it with the stricter Personal Independence Payment (Pip) from 2013.

It claimed the move would make "savings" while making sure money would go to those who most needed it.

The reality is a world apart from the Tory spin.

The change affected some 640,000 people—of those reassessed for Pip from DLA, 27 percent were denied the Pip benefits.

Additional changes to Pip, which came into force last month, have cut £3.7 billion from disability benefits.

Some 160,000 people were denied disability benefits because of these changes which target those with mental health issues and "invisible disabilities".

Sanctions for benefit



Labour's Debbie Abrahams

claimants have become stricter.

People have been denied their benefits because they were ill, were five minutes late

for an appointment, or because they were at a job interview.

Since 2010, eight million benefit sanctions have been imposed, hitting some three million people.

These are just some of the benefit changes the Tories have pushed through.

A 2016 National Audit Office report exposed the Tory lies about "savings". Outsourcing assessments is costing more in corporate administrative fees than the reforms

will ever save in reduced benefit payments.

As Labour's the shadow work and pensions secretary Debbie Abrahams said, "These flawed Tory assessments only create further waste and expense."

The Tories' want to paint those on benefits as "scroungers", rather than victims of austerity.

But their assault on benefits is also meant to send a warning to those in work not to complain and risk joining those in welfare hell.

IN BRIEF

Warehouse workers win in South Yorks

WAREHOUSE WORKERS in South Yorkshire have won an improved pay offer after threatening a series of hard hitting strikes.

The Unite union members, based at logistics giant DHL's warehouses in Tickhill and Harworth, had planned 18 strike days from next Monday.

Bosses have agreed to a 2.6 percent pay rise, having offered 1.25 percent before.

PCS union unveils rolling strikes plan

EQUALITY AND Human Rights Commission (EHRC) workers were set to begin 20 days of rolling strikes against cuts from Monday of next week.

The PCS union members' action will begin in Glasgow from 15-19 May, followed by London from 22 to 26 May, Cardiff from 29 May to 2 June, and Manchester from 5 to 9 June.

■A BALLOT for strikes at Sheffield Eastern Avenue job centre was set to finish this Friday.

The PCS union members are fighting to stop the closure of their office.

■ELECTIONS TO the PCS' national executive committee were set to end this Thursday. Socialist Worker supporters back the PCS Democracy Alliance candidates that includes the Left Unity slate.

Scottish councils pay ballot delayed

A UNISON union ballot of 70,000 Scottish local government workers that was due to start last Friday was delayed until this Thursday.

Council chiefs have offered a £350 increase for those earning under £35,000 a year and a 1 percent increase for those earning above.

The union is calling for £1,000 increase for everyone.

The ballot ends on 30 May.

Take on the bigots in Birmingham

AN ABORTION rights demonstration will take on an anti-choice "March for Life" in Birmingham on Saturday 20 May.

The pro-choice protest was called by the Abortion Rights campaign. It assembles at 12 noon, Victoria Square, Birmingham city centre.

●Go to abortionrights.org.uk

March to remember mining disaster

AROUND 500 people marched through Barnsley last Sunday to the unveiling of the Oaks mining disaster memorial.

Some 361 miners and rescuers were killed in the worst mining disaster in England 150 years ago.

George Arthur

CAR WORKERS

AROUND 200 workers at Rolls-Royce struck last Friday

Workers rev up to stop Rolls-Royce's robbery

WORKERS MAKING Rolls-Royce cars in Goodwood, West Sussex, struck for the first time in almost 40 years last Friday.

The Unite union members are fighting against BMW Group's robbery of their pension scheme.

David Elson, Unite convenor at the site, told the Chichester Observer newspaper, "This is a very passionate topic for a lot of people."

Greed

"A lot of people feel this is opportunistic greed by BMW—it's nothing more than that."

"This is an organisation making billions of profits a year and this is an attack on the UK pension scheme."

Bosses at BMW Group's plan

to close workers' final salary pension scheme on 31 May.

This would steal thousands of pounds a year from workers' retirement incomes—money they have already paid in.

Workers at the BMW engine plant at Hams Hall also struck on Wednesday of last week.

This follows two walkouts by workers at the Mini plants in Cowley in Oxford and Swindon last month.

The first coordinated strike at all four plants is set for Tuesday of next week.

The firm is making bumper profits, and has struggled to justify the attack through the "uncertainty" caused by Brexit. But its workers reject this excuse.

They are taking a stand

against the onslaught on pension schemes across the private sector—and are determined to win.

Summer

David said, "This is just the start of industrial action."

"We intend to proceed with industrial action throughout the summer until we make BMW listen to our members and their concerns."

●Send messages of support at bit.ly/2pnFehl and sign the petition at bit.ly/2pWvJHO

Upcoming strike dates:

Tue 16 May—all four sites

Thu 18 May—all four sites

Sun 21 May—Cowley and Swindon

Wed 24 May—Goodwood and Hams Hall

BECTU UNION

Solidarity for Picturehouse

THE BECTU section of the Prospect union held its annual conference in Brighton this week.

Picturehouse cinema workers from London and Brighton told the conference about their long-running battle for the Living Wage and union recognition.

The Bectu leadership

rejected the cinema workers' call for them to supervise their own picket lines, instead of union officials.

But delegates unanimously supported a motion to increase contributions to the Picturehouse hardship fund.

Delegates also reaffirmed Bectu's support for Stand Up To Racism.

USDW UNION

Lively debate over Labour

THE USDW retail workers' union held its annual conference in Blackpool last week.

The union leadership, strongly aligned with the Labour right, invited deputy party leader Tom Watson to speak.

But many delegates spoke in favour of motions

that supported Jeremy Corbyn and slammed the Parliamentary Labour Party. While the motions lost, they generated a lively debate.

Usdaw also launched a No Room for Racism campaign in response to members reporting an increase in racial harassment.

●More on socialistworker.co.uk

IT WORKERS

Fujitsu bosses' mask slips as workers hold a protest

UNITE UNION members walked out for 24 hours across IT giant Fujitsu's sites on Monday.

In London, workers also leafleted potential customers at the Regional Business Technology Expo at the London Olympia in west London.

Matt Whaley, a senior shop steward, told Socialist Worker, "We've had some people say they're going to tell the Fujitsu stand inside they don't approve of what it's doing."

"Fujitsu is very sensitive to protests because they are very careful with their PR image."

This followed protests outside branches of major Fujitsu client Sainsbury's last Thursday and Friday when workers previously struck.

The workers are fighting to defend their jobs, pay and conditions as Fujitsu undertakes a massive cost-cutting operation—including 1,800 job cuts.

Matt added, "We've made progress in talks but there still isn't an offer, so we've stepped up the campaign with more 'leverage' protests and more strike days."

"We've had a lot of support from trades councils and others."

Strikers are walking out at sites in Basingstoke, Belfast, Birmingham, Bracknell, Crewe, Edinburgh, London, Manchester, Stevenage, Wakefield and Warrington.

Their next strikes were set to take place on Thursday and Friday.

●To send messages of support go to bit.ly/2pYdyJ



Union rep Matt Whaley

HOUSING

Tenants at One Housing beat landlords' rent hike

by ALISTAIR FARROW

HOUSING association tenants in West Ham, east London, scored a victory against their greedy landlords last week.

The One Housing association was forced to back down from threats to hike tenants' rent by 40 percent.

Robert Marcantoni, One Housing Group assistant director, announced the climbdown in an email to Truus Jansen, chair of the One Housing Tenants' Action Group.

The email states the group's intention to "put on hold" rent rises and changes in tenancy agreements "pending further discussions with residents".

A protest scheduled outside the One Housing offices in east London was called off last weekend.

The rent increase would have forced people to leave London.

Their homes are safe for now, but One Housing will likely come back for more if they think they can get away with it.

Truus said, "They've agreed to meet me and tenants' action group representatives to discuss our concerns."

"We will demand that One Housing Group honours the



Tenants protest in March

agreement it entered into with the council.

"It was to provide housing for 'key workers' on low and medium incomes."

Their victory shows that tenants can organise and fightback against the increasing marketisation of housing associations.

■HOUSING campaigners in Haringey are planning a demonstration for 20 June.

Their campaign to stop the demolition of seven estates in the north London borough has brought hundreds of people to meetings in recent months.

The plans are being pushed through under the Labour-run council's Haringey Development Vehicle "regeneration" plans.

●Go to stophdv.com for more details

HIGHER EDUCATION

Lecturers win after unofficial action

by SADIE ROBINSON

A GROUP of teaching staff at London's School of Oriental and African Studies (Soas) have scored a significant victory after taking unofficial action.

The fractional lecturers, who are employed on a fraction of a full term contract, were fighting for better conditions.

More than 60 of them had refused to submit essay marks for the last six weeks – and they have now won their demands.

The fractionals in the UCU union had demanded to be paid for time spent marking.

Pay

Bosses have agreed to do this and to backdate the pay for the full year.

Workers will get 40 hours' pay for every 100 essays marked.

There will be a cap on class sizes in tutorial groups to no more than 15, unless a higher figure is agreed by the worker.

Bosses will also consider increasing the number of permanent roles, and they have made a research fund of £100,000 a year available to workers.



FRACTIONAL LECTURERS have scored a victory after unofficial action

This is to enable lecturers to attend conferences and other activities.

The agreement promises that fractional staff who took part in the unofficial marking boycott will not be disciplined.

Fractional lecturers had

won huge solidarity from permanent staff and students.

Around 90 percent of the academic staff had signed statements in support of their struggle.

They also pledged not to do the work of fractional staff.

Sandy Nicoll is branch secretary of the Unison union at Soas.

He told Socialist Worker, "I'm delighted that the fractionals have forced the school to see sense."

"This is a very significant victory."

BRIGHTON



Workers on the picket at University of Brighton

Why escalating action works

by MARK ABEL, chair, UCU Coordinating Committee, University of Brighton (pc)

UCU UNION members at the University of Brighton have fought off an attempt by their management to effectively derecognise their union.

The university unilaterally cancelled part of the promotions procedure, breaching an agreement with the UCU. It demoted a group of part-time lecturers and issued redundancy notices to three lecturers.

The UCU tried to address these issues through the university's disputes procedure. The vice chancellor refused to acknowledge the dispute, stating, "The university does not require the agreement of the UCU in respect of these issues".

UCU members voted by more than three to one in favour of industrial action in response. A campaign of escalating strikes, beginning with a two-day strike, followed by three days two weeks later, was drawn up.

The union also instituted a work-to-contract.

The prospect of escalating action during the summer term,

combined with reputational damage, forced the university to the negotiating table before the first two-day strike.

The resulting agreement, endorsed overwhelmingly by members, represents an unequivocal victory. The university was forced to reinstate the promotions procedure and promise that no changes can take place without UCU agreement.

It agreed to an independent review of the demotions and made a statement which protects lecturers from being replaced by staff on lower grades.

Crucially, the university conceded that no area of staff terms and conditions was off limits for union negotiation and agreement, and committed to abide by the disputes procedure.

This was achieved by UCU members' determination to fight. It is a clear vindication of the strategy of escalating strikes.

The university has suffered a serious setback in its attempts to erode workers' conditions and cut its wage bill. There will be more battles in the future, but Brighton UCU is better placed to face them as a result of this victory.

UNITE UNION

Building the union's base

THE UNITE union's recent general secretary election—in which incumbent Len McCluskey only narrowly beat a right wing challenge—revealed problems in the union.

Rank and file challenger Ian Allinson's strong vote points to the opportunities to address them.

Allinson held meetings in Manchester and Glasgow last weekend, with more planned in London and Birmingham this weekend, to "keep shaking up Unite to make it more effective".

Activists discussed building an organisation out of the campaign.

This would focus on building solidarity for disputes, challenging some of Unite's policies and giving a voice and an

organising forum to like-minded activists.

The small size of left groups and the relative lack of mass activity by ordinary Unite members are an obstacle to building a true rank and file movement.

But it's essential to build some organisation at the union's base and challenge the grip of its complacent full-time bureaucracy.

The new organisation should not be an electoral group but—as Allinson has argued—be open to members of United Left.

Many activists are in United Left to back McCluskey supporters in union elections but are open to the argument that more is needed.

Dave Sewell

Go to ian4unite.org

HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

Lincolnshire bikers warn against hospital closures

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

DOZENS OF bikers took to the roads of Lincolnshire to highlight the danger of closing local hospitals last Sunday. It was organised by the Fighting 4 Life Lincolnshire NHS campaign.

Under the guise of improving patient care, the Tories aim to slash £22 billion from the NHS England budget by 2020/21 through Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs).

Melissa Darcey, a health campaigner, told Socialist Worker, "We're a rural area and need all the hospitals to stay open—and more services on top of that."

"They're talking about centralising services in Lincoln, but from some parts of the county it's 46 miles to Lincoln."

"If those hospitals close people will die—that's the reality."

Under the local STP, Grantham and District Hospital is under threat and maternity services across the county will be centralised to Lincoln.

Night

The accident and emergency department at Grantham has already been closed at night.

These wholesale Tory cuts will force patients to travel further distances.

The bikers set off from Grantham, touring hospitals in Boston, Skegness and Louth on their way to Ancaster.

At Louth they were greeted by a welcoming party.

They are now planning a bigger "Bikers' ride for the NHS" event on Saturday 4 June.

LONDON UNDERGROUND



On strike at London Bridge station on Monday

London Bridge 3 dispute to spread across the network

RMT UNION members based in "all station areas and cover groups" on London Underground (LU) are to be balloted for action in defence of three colleagues at London Bridge station.

The "London Bridge 3" were involved in an incident with a passenger without

a ticket last year but have been sacked or disciplined with 52-week warnings.

Workers at London Bridge struck on Monday and the union has taken the step to ballot all grades across stations. They demand the three are reinstated and all disciplinary charges dropped.

Cops slammed for car search

A POLICE stop and search of a vehicle in High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire has led to several officers facing allegations of assault and threatening behaviour.

Police stopped the vehicle on Friday of last week and demanded to search the passengers.

When one of them refused, he said he was pepper sprayed directly in the face, handcuffed and taken to the floor.

He said his legs were strapped and he was pepper sprayed again numerous times while restrained.

Family members including the passenger's two brothers came out of their property upon hearing his screams and shouts from officers.

Sprayed

The two brothers were also pepper sprayed, triggering an asthma attack for one of them. They were also arrested.

The wife of the other brother was almost pushed over while holding a three year old child.

All those arrested were taken to High Wycombe police station. There they



A STILL from a video of the incident available on Socialist Worker's website

say that, despite their medical conditions and injuries, they were kept outside the station in cuffs and leg bands for around four hours.

They were then formally

booked into custody and checked over by a medic.

All three were released at around 4pm the next day and charged with public order offences relating to using

threatening language and disorderly behaviour.

No charges relate to anything found as a result of the vehicle stop and search.

They are all connected with

what happened afterwards. The family and residents contacted the Justice4Paps campaign. It was set up in July 2008 after the death of Habib "Paps" Ullah during a routine stop and search in High Wycombe.

Justice

The fight for justice for "Paps" continues.

Zia Ullah is from Justice4Paps and the founder of High Wycombe Community Advocates.

He told Socialist Worker, "We have really serious concerns about the way people were treated, and we believe they also relate to incidents over a long period."

"We ask everyone to hear our case, watch the video, and help us to secure the truth."

"We demand a response from Thames Valley Police and immediate scrutiny of their actions on Friday evening."

Police deny any wrongdoing.

Watch online...
Video of the stop and search at bit.ly/2puw40h

Dump NHS cuts now

LABOUR'S shadow health secretary John Ashworth pledged to put a brake on Tory plans to slash the NHS across England last week.

Ashworth said Labour would announce a "moratorium" of the Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs). "We have listened to the hundreds of patients and campaigners up and down the country," he said.

"We will halt planned closures to hospitals and other services."

Carving England up into 44 "footprints", the STPs aim to slash £22 billion from the NHS budget by 2020-21.

Closures

The Tories claim that "centralising" services will improve patient care, but their plans are for wholesale closures and downgrading.

Ashworth's call is the result of the hundreds of local health campaigns and the recent 200,000-strong march in London.

Ashworth said that he would lead a review of the STPs. But this will slow down Labour's pledge to renationalise the NHS. The STPs are part of the Tories' drive to break it apart—they should be dumped immediately.

Post workers' unofficial walkout forces Royal Mail bosses to lift reps' suspension

by NICK CLARK

POSTAL workers across Milton Keynes and Luton forced bosses into a climbdown from an attack on two union reps with an unofficial walkout on Monday.

Workers at nine Royal Mail offices walked out on Monday morning after two of their leading CWU union reps were suspended on Friday.

And workers from the nearby South Midlands mail centre refused to cross the picket lines.

The strikers only went back to work on Tuesday after their action

forced bosses to lift the reps' suspension.

Disciplinary proceedings against the reps are still going ahead.

CWU regional secretary Paul Moffat told Socialist Worker, "It's the action that's forced Royal Mail to focus their minds and lift the suspension."

Standstill

"The MK and LU postcodes that the action affected are a huge area. It brought the whole thing to a standstill and caused chaos."

The walkout began after Royal Mail bosses suspended CWU reps Neal Kidwell and Tom Oakey after accusing them of



Picket line selfie—workers stand up for their reps

claiming unauthorised overtime. But CWU officials say the two had followed custom and practice in claiming their overtime, which had been signed off by a manager.

Dispute

Instead it was an attempt by bosses to get rid of two union reps in the run up to a huge dispute that could see national strikes later this year.

"We see it as an attack on our two senior reps," said Paul.

"This could have happened to any rep in Royal Mail."

"That's why this is a national issue,

it's not isolated to these two people."

The walkout came as Royal Mail bosses are getting ready to launch a massive attack on workers' pensions, pay and conditions.

Delegates at the CWU's annual postal conference last month unanimously agreed they could ballot for strikes later this year.

Monday's walkout shows the kind of action that can win.

Paul said, "The members are up for a dust up at the moment—Royal Mail are attacking everything."

"The members would have been out again today if they needed to."